



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAMEH ELKHISHIN, FIRST SECRETARY OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATION, AT THE FIRST INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ON THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION FOR THE 2018 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (New York, 8 June 2018)

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Allow me at the outset to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, and H.E. Ambassador Gillian Bird, Permanent Representative of Australia for assuming the responsibility of co-facilitating the informal consultations on the Ministerial Declaration for the 2018 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The Group would like to reiterate its commitment to engage constructively throughout the upcoming process towards a consensus-based substantive outcome document encompassing all the relevant issues.

Since the issuance of the timetable of the negotiations, the Group has made every effort to come up today with comprehensive, concrete and substantive proposals for inclusion in the zero draft of the ministerial declaration. Allow me to present our views and proposals that we wish to include in the ministerial declaration

G77& China Input Paper

Ministerial Declaration of 2018 of High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)

Format of the Ministerial Declaration

The Group is of the view that the same structure of the 2017's Ministerial declaration should be followed with the following subsections: Introduction and cross cutting issues; SDGs under review including SDG17; Means of implementation; and Follow-up and review.

Substance of the Ministerial Declaration

The Group wishes to highlight the following elements for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration:

I. Crosscutting section

- Poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the overarching goal of the 2030 Agenda. It is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. Likewise, ending hunger and achieving food security is fundamental for sustainable development. In this regard we express concerns that, at the global level, poverty remains a principal cause of hunger and that the number of undernourished people has been on the rise since 2014, reaching an estimated 815 million in 2016. It is important to keep addressing those issues elaborately as cross-cutting issues.

- Reaffirming the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the need to take into account different national realities, capacities, and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.

- Addressing diverse needs and the challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Small Island developing States as conflict and post-conflict countries and countries and peoples living under foreign occupation as well as the specific challenges faced by MICs. It is significant also to emphasize the call for further effective measures and actions to be taken, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment.

- We reaffirm, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.

- We must redouble our efforts to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, resolve or prevent conflict and to support post-conflict countries, including by ensuring that women have a role in peacebuilding and Statebuilding.

- It is significant that cross-cutting section addresses the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner.

- It is significant that cross-cutting section takes into account the contribution of the UNEA to the HLPF on sustainable development.

- It is significant that the cross-cutting section takes into account the Empowerment of women and girls and gender equality.

- The Group affirms that states have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies, and the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to ecosystems of other States or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. We reaffirm the importance of the protection of planet Earth and its ecosystems as our common home and that "Mother Earth" is a common expression in a number of countries and regions.

- The Group reaffirms that the right of peoples and nations to permanent sovereignty over natural wealth and resources must be exercised in the interest of their national development and of the well-being of the people of the State concerned.

- While emphasizing the sovereignty of countries and peoples over their natural wealth, the Group is also aware of the duty to respect protect, conserve and sustainably manage and use these resources and ensure the conditions for nature and ecosystems to have the capacity to regenerate, for the benefit of present and future generations. We also recognize that the sustainable use of natural resources is an effective way to achieve economic growth in harmony with nature while contributing to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and environmental degradation.

- States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries

- The Group Stress that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable.

The year 2017 was one of the three warmest years on record and was 1.1 degree Celsius above pre-historical levels. We recognize the need for an effective and progressive response to the urgent threat of climate change on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge. Welcoming the Paris Agreement and its early entry into force, we encourage all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible, and further welcomes the upcoming entry into force of the Kigali Amendment and for the upcoming 30th MoP to the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone Layer, in Quito,

- We recognize the synergies between the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. We acknowledge the importance of continued support for and international cooperation on adaptation and mitigation efforts and on strengthening resilience. We stress the necessity of adequate and predictable financial resources from a variety of sources, including public and private ones. We highlight the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. We recognize that effective disaster risk management contributes to sustainable development. We underline the importance of strengthening disaster risk reduction and early warning systems, in order to minimize the consequences of disasters;

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- We commit to devoting ourselves collectively to the pursuit of global development and of "win-win" cooperation which can bring huge gains to all countries and all parts of the world.

II. SDGS under review

The Group is of the view that paragraphs addressing each of the SDGs under review should indicate the progress that has been achieved in implementation, ongoing and future challenges, and actions needed for achievement of the goals and targets.

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

- The group affirms the need to expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes.

- The Group recognizes that the World Water Forum, since its first convened in Marrakesh, Morocco, in 1997, has contributed to international dialogue on water and has promoted local, national and regional action on integrated and sustainable water resources management worldwide and acknowledges the successful organization of the Eighth World Water Forum in Brasilia, Brazil from 18 to 23 March 2018, contributing to establishing water priority at the global level.

- The Group emphasizes the need to continue stressing that water is critical for sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger and is indispensable for human development, health and wellbeing and a vital element of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant goals in the social, environmental and economic fields.

- The group is deeply concerned that lack of access to a safe drinking water source, basic sanitation and sound hygiene, water-related disasters, water scarcity and water pollution will be further exacerbated by urbanization, population growth, desertification, drought and other extreme

weather events and climate change, as well as by the lack of capacity to ensure integrated water resource management.

- In this context, the Group is concerned that too many people still lack access to safely managed water and sanitation facilities. It is a matter of concern that 844 million people around the world still lack basic managed drinking water services, and 2.3 billion people still lacked a basic level of sanitation services.

- ODA for the water sector should be increased taking into consideration that any reduction in external aid is likely to hamper progress towards implementation of SDG6.

- The Group emphasizes that water scarcity, flooding, and lack of proper water management and management of wastewater hinder social and economic development and that increasing water efficiency and improving water management are critical to balancing the competing and growing water demands from various sectors and users. The Group stresses that developing countries need capacity building and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to achieve water efficiency.

- The Group expresses its concerns that water stress is above 70 percent in some countries, which are mostly in Northern Africa, Western Asia and Central and Southern Asia, which indicates strong probability of future water scarcity. The Group acknowledges the additional challenges facing countries suffering from water scarcity and concerned with the impacts of such challenges including, inter-alia, on their ability to achieve the SDGs.

- The Group welcomes the launch of the International Decade "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028, on 22 March 2018 which has the objectives to greater focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic and environmental objectives, as well as on the furtherance of cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- In this regard, the Group welcomes the initiative of the Government of Tajikistan to host jointly with the United Nations High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018 - 2028 to take place in Tajikistan from 20 - 22 June 2018 aiming at advancing abovementioned objectives.

- The Group stresses the needs to improve knowledge generation and dissemination, facilitating access to knowledge and the exchange of good practices, generating new information relevant to the water-related Sustainable Development Goals, pursuing advocacy, networking and promoting partnership and action by different actors to implement the water-related Goals and targets in coordination with existing initiatives and strengthening communication actions at various levels for the implementation of the water-related Goals

- The Group emphasizes the need to promote transboundary cooperation through the increase in joint investments and joint management of water infrastructure as well as through joint consultation mechanisms and joint plans for the development of river basin, lakes, and aquifers.

Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

- The Group stresses the necessity of ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy for all. International cooperation should be strengthened to assist developing countries achieving this target as well as expanding infrastructure and upgrading technology for supplying

modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries.

- We are alarmed by the poor rate of progress in energy access and that we will not achieve our goals at the current rate of progress, we are concerned that 1 billion people are still living without access to energy and we call for increased accelerated efforts. The group encourages the SG to explain how relevant entities will address the access gap in the newly reinvigorated RC system.
- International cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology must be strengthened with a view to transfer the relevant technologies to the developing countries.
- While we acknowledge that access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking has gradually improved to reach 59 per cent globally in 2016, we are concerned that 3 billion people are still without access to clean cooking and heating almost all in developing countries with 4 million associated annual deaths. States should strive to overcome the barriers to increased access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking, which include, inter alia, high user costs for many of the cleaner cooking solutions, limited infrastructure limited financing for producers seeking to enter the clean fuel and stove markets.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

- The Group recalls the importance of promoting and taking concrete action for the full, effective and timely implementation of the New Urban Agenda, adopted in Quito, Ecuador in 2016 at all levels while urging the United Nations development system to maintain support for its implementation,
- Many cities are facing challenges in managing population growth, ensuring there is adequate housing and resilient infrastructure to support these growing populations, and addressing the environmental impacts of expanding cities and vulnerability to disasters.
- We reaffirm the significance of ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums. We are concerned that with rapid migration to cities and corresponding increases in the global urban population, the actual number of people living in slums increased from 689 million to 881 million. In many cities, especially in the developing countries, slums dwellers constitutes more than half of the urban population with little or no access to shelter, water, and sanitation. There is an urgent need for international cooperation and solidarity to improve the life of slum dwellers in the developing countries.
- Management and collection of solid waste continues to be a challenge in many regions with significant and adverse effects from uncollected waste in cities, including direct and indirect effects on the health of residents and the environment.
- The Group is concerned that 91 per cent of the urban population still breathed air that did not meet the WHO's Air Quality Guidelines value for particulate matter (PM 2.5) and more than half was exposed to air pollution levels at least 2.5 times above that safety standard. Transfer of environmentally sound technologies for developing countries is essential to achieving air quality.
- The Group stresses the necessity of strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

- The Group stresses the need to accelerate implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Patterns with developed countries taking the lead.
- Decoupling economic growth from resource use has been challenging. Addressing this will require profound transformation of business practices along global value chains especially by transnational companies. We urge transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle.
- The Group emphasizes the need for more enhanced contribution to resource efficiency and decoupling economic growth from resource use, while creating decent job and economic opportunities and contributing to poverty eradication.
- The Group recalls our common determination to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, ensuring that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature.
- The Group is concerned that Domestic Material Consumption (DMC), which gives an indication of materials used in production processes within an economy, are growing globally both in unit of GDP and in absolute terms, with consequences in terms of both resource pressures and associated environmental impacts.
- Developing countries need financial and technical assistance to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

- While protecting areas in forest and terrestrial ecosystems is on the rise and forest loss has slowed, other facets of terrestrial conservation continue to need accelerated efforts to protect biodiversity, land productivity and species and genetic resources.
- The Group notes that despite a decrease in forest area over the last decades, the rate of forest loss has been cut by 25 per cent since the period 2000-2005. Restoring degraded forests and substantially increasing afforestation and reforestation globally is still required.
- The Group is concerned about the continuous trend of land degradation in which about one fifth of the Earth's land surface covered by vegetation showed persistent and declining trends in productivity. It is a matter of concern that in some cases, advanced stages of land degradation are leading to desertification. It is significant to continue combatting desertification, restoring degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, especially in developing countries.
- Urgent and significant action is still needed to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species.
- The Group urges stepping up efforts to halt the biodiversity loss and protect the ecosystems that support food and water security and health for billions of people. We look forward for 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity- COP 14, which will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt on November 2018.

- The Group reaffirms the necessity of fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. We welcome the increase in ratification of Nagoya Protocol up from 96 countries (in 2017) to 105 countries. The Group notes that 50 countries have shared information on their access and benefit-sharing frameworks.
- The group is concerned by the continuous illicit poaching and trafficking of wildlife, with nearly 7,000 species of animals and plants reported in illegal trade, which continues to thwart conservation efforts. Strong international and local action is still needed to curtail the illegal trade in certain species, particularly ivory.
- We are concerned that bilateral ODA in support of biodiversity in 2016 decreased 21 per cent in real terms over 2015.
- The Group welcomes the outcomes of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;
- The Group takes note with appreciation of the adoption of the Ordos Declaration at the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention urging countries to step up efforts on all fronts to tackle desertification, land degradation and drought, which are seen as major environmental, economic and social challenges for global sustainable development;
- The Group recognizes the value of the global observance of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, on 17 June 2018, hosted by Ecuador, to raise the awareness of the importance of productive land for our livelihoods at a global level.

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

- SDG17 is key and prerequisite for achieving other SDGS.
- The Group recognizes that a stronger commitment to partnership and cooperation is needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That effort will require coherent policies and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors. We are concerned about the significant impacts of the current challenging global environment on national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, including not only economic factors such as difficult macroeconomic conditions, low commodity prices, subdued trade growth and volatile capital flows, but also natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, humanitarian crises and conflicts. The Group stresses the need for concrete and immediate action to create the necessary enabling environment at all levels for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Group emphasizes that the scale and level of ambition of the 2030 Agenda require strengthening and promoting effective and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- The Group recognizes that the world faces many challenges and risks that could hinder achievement of 2030 agenda. Cyclical upturn disguise significant weaknesses and medium-term risks. A disorderly tightening of financial conditions, the adoption of inward-looking policies and debt vulnerabilities as well as escalation of geopolitical tensions could disrupt development progress. Persistently high levels of inequality pose a challenge to robust growth and sustainable development. Declining private investment in infrastructure indicates inability to sufficiently align investment with long-term sustainable development. The Group stresses that those challenges should be addressed through our collective endeavors with a view to identifying the means to

accelerate the pace of progress toward achieving 2030 agenda.

- The Group stresses that appropriate emphasis has to be placed on an enabling global environment and global partnership for development, balanced against the increasing emphasis being placed on domestic resource mobilization
- We recognize that both public and private investment have key roles to play in infrastructure financing, including through development banks, development finance institutions and tools and mechanisms such as public-private partnerships,

III. Means of Implementation

International development cooperation

- International public finance is key to achieving 2030 Agenda. Official development assistance (ODA) is key and indispensable for achieving sustainable development goals. It is the principal channel for international cooperation and must continue to remain so.
- Part of ODA resources has been shifted to funds for hosting and processing refugees within donor countries. The Group emphasizes that the shift of ODA resources towards humanitarian and crisis situations is not consistent with long-term and sustainable approach to financing development needed to achieve 2030 agenda.
- There is a decline in country programmable aid (the share of ODA over which recipient countries have a significant say). In this context, the Group stresses that ODA should be aligned with national priorities and development strategies of the recipient countries.
- Developed countries still fall short of achieving UN target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national income. The average of ODA is limited to 0.32 per cent of GNI for donors countries combined.

International trade as an engine for development

- International trade is an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication as well as an important source to finance development and achieving sustainable development goals.
- A universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system can stimulate development worldwide. The constraints impeding the developing countries from harnessing the benefits of international trade must be overcome. It is a matter of deep concern that the Doha Development Agenda, which aims at addressing the systemic imbalances in the multilateral trading system and ensuring more integration of the developing countries in international trade, has not been concluded. We are concerned with the increase in the protectionist measures.
- The principle of special & differential treatment for developing countries must be enshrined and strengthened in the architecture of the multilateral trading system, with a view to enabling developing countries to achieve structural transformation, industrial development, economic diversification, and food security.
- The issues of particular concern to developing countries, including trade barriers, trade-distorting subsidies, and other trade-distorting measures must be addressed, especially as related to sectors of special export interest to them with a view to enhancing their capacities to finance development and to diversifying their economies.

Debt and debt sustainability

- Emerging debt challenges and vulnerabilities have intensified across developing countries since 2017. Several developing countries are fiscally constrained in generating resources needed for implementation of 2030 agenda due to their debt burdens. Risks of a potential renewed cycle of debt crises and economic disruption, pose severe challenge to the achievement of the SDGs.
- The Group urges exploring the necessary measures to reduce the indebtedness of the developing countries including through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring and sound debt management.
- The Group stresses that the ability to sustainably service debts out of export earnings is crucial for the developing countries, especially countries most in need of resources for development.

Addressing systemic issues

- The 2008 world financial and economic crisis highlighted the regulatory gaps in the international financial system. The structural reform of the international financial and monetary system and the relevant institutions is urgently needed to avoid recurrence of crises that could have severe negative impacts on the economies of the developing countries. Reducing spillover effects of global financial crises to developing countries must be at the core of the reform agenda.
- The reform of the international financial and monetary system must seek to curb speculative activities, which augment systemic risks and increase financial volatility.
- Adoption of measures for addressing excessive volatility of commodity prices are needed to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives, taking into consideration the negative consequences of such volatility on food security and agriculture worldwide. Efforts must be made to ensure that commodity markets appropriately reflect demand and supply changes and to help limit excess volatility of commodity prices.
- There is a need to make the international financial system and the relevant institutions more responsive to the needs and concerns of developing countries, including through broadening and strengthening their participation in the global economic governance and the international economic decision-making.

Science, technology, innovation

- The Group stresses that technology transfer is one of the core priorities of the developing countries in implementing 2030 agenda. Eliminating constraints on technology transfer to the developing countries is urgently required.
- Enhancing capacity building in science, technology and innovation is fundamental for the progress of the developing countries in implementing 2030 agenda. In this regard, there is an urgent need for allocation of financing for the fulfillment of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism's (TFM) mandate, including for the operationalization of the online platform as a gateway for information on existing STI initiatives, mechanisms and programs.
- Access to high-speed connections remains largely unavailable in the developing countries. In 2016, high-speed fixed broadband penetration reached 6 per cent of the population in developing countries, compared to 24 per cent in developed countries. Limitations in the capacity and speed of fixed-broadband connections will affect the quality and functionality of this development tool, and

widen the already existing inequalities

- The group recognizes the important role of frontier technologies as well as sharing best practices and invites all States to identify those technologies and use the HLPF to share the knowledge.
- Welcomes the operationalization of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and the inauguration of its headquarters in Gebze, Turkey, and invites States, as well as international organizations, foundations and the private sector, to provide financial and technical assistance to the Technology Bank to ensure its effective operation;

Capacity-building

The group stresses the need to enhance capacity-building at all levels as an essential prerequisite to achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication. In this regard, we call upon developed countries to step up support to developing countries in order to help them fulfill their capacity- building gap.

Domestic public resources

- Mobilization of domestic public resources to finance development is not only limited to the relevant national policies. Global systemic factors beyond national jurisdictions can affect the ability of the developing countries to mobilize their domestic public resources. The Group stresses that it is significant to address the international-related aspects affecting developing countries' capabilities to mobilize their domestic public resources to finance development.
- While developing countries seek to maximize their domestic public resources in order to achieve 2030 agenda, through broadening the tax base, there is an urgent need to address the international aspects of taxation with a view to achieve a fair international tax regime. Among the most relevant issues in this regard are the challenges posed by the lack of universal and fair norms regarding international cooperation in tax matters as well as a universal body to address those issues.
- The illicit financial flows and the non-restitutions of these assets have severe negative impacts on the developing countries depriving them of huge resources that could be used to finance development. Strengthening intergovernmental consideration to defining, measuring, and combatting illicit financial is key to achieve 2030 agenda.

Domestic and international private business and finance

- The private sector must contribute in mobilizing resources needed to finance sustainable development. A commitment towards a long-term approach must be emphasized with a view to avoid shorttermism of private sector actors. However, contribution of the private business in financing development should not be overestimated.
- The Group emphasizes that financial markets and the private sector's activities and operations must align with the sustainable development. The international community should seek to create the necessary conditions and the enabling international environment for private resources to be adequately channeled towards achieving long-term sustainable development goals. Foreign direct investment must be increased and become more long-term oriented and aligned with national development priorities to support developing countries in implementing the SDGs.
- The Group is concerned by the decrease of remittances sent by international migrants to their home countries due to stricter immigration policies in many migrant-destination countries, which

continue to constrain the flow of those remittances.

IV. Follow-up and review

- The Group notes that some targets are not reflected at the report of the Secretary General entitled "progress towards the Sustainable Development", owing to a lack of data, or because they are measured by indicators that are still undergoing methodological development.
- The Group stresses the need for enhancing capacity building of national statistical offices of the developing countries.